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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 PRISTINA 000554

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE  
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DEPT FOR DRL, INL, EUR/SCE  
NSC FOR BRAUN  
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TAGS: [EAID](#) [KCRM](#) [KDEM](#) [KJUS](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [YI](#) [UNMIK](#)  
SUBJECT: KOSOVO: CONTROVERSY CONTINUES OVER ICTY VISIT;  
KRUSHE E VOGEL SURVIVORS STILL BELIEVE BODIES CAN BE FOUND

REF: A. PRISTINA 461

- [1](#)B. THE HAGUE 01294
- [1](#)C. PRISTINA 282
- [1](#)D. PRISTINA 480

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SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED, PROTECT ACCORDINGLY

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY. Several widows from the Krushe e Vogel/Mala Krusa massacre say they first assisted a visiting UN convoy on May 25, but then grew suspicious when the convoy showed interest in the local Serb graveyard and the homes of former Serb residents. One widow expressed no remorse over attacking international police, and continues to assert that at least one Serb former resident was in the convoy. Head of UNMIK's Department of Justice Al Moskowitz said the identity of one of the Serbs in the convoy is not certain and is being investigated. Authorities have found and identified the remains of only 14 of the 112 victims of the massacre. Family members believe that the perpetrators, who they say have information that could lead to the discovery of the remains of the 98 victims who are still missing, are living freely in Serbia and Western Europe. The Acting Director of UNMIK's Office of Missing Persons and Forensics believes Serbs burned the rest of the victims beyond possible identification and they will never be found. END SUMMARY.

WIDOWS ASSISTED UNMIK CONVOY UNTIL SUSPICIONS AROUSED  
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[1](#)2. (SBU) Seven of the widows of the Krushe e Vogel/Mala Krusa massacre told PolOff and PolFSN on June 21 that approximately 20 UN vehicles came unannounced to their village on May 25 and drove around visiting several sites (Ref A). The widows said that at first they thought maybe the convoy had come to return the bodies of their missing, and this generated a great deal of excitement and interest. (NOTE. Of the 112 victims of the Krushe e Vogel massacre, 98

remain missing. END NOTE.)). They said that four people (three police officers and one interpreter) got out and toured the massacre site, and residents told them about the events of March 25 and 26, 1999. The widows said residents were cooperative until several of the vehicles aroused suspicion by stopping at the Serb graveyard and driving past the homes of former Serb residents.

13. (SBU) Nezire Batusha, who lost her husband and two sons, aged 15 and 21, said she confronted the visitors, and demanded to know if there were any Serbs in the convoy. Batusha claimed she and her brother-in-law approached the convoy and recognized two former Serb neighbors inside the vehicles. Batusha said that in the ensuing melee, an international policeman hit her in the kidneys and an UNMIK vehicle ran over her foot. The petite and mild-mannered woman said she attacked the policeman and drew blood, and "would have kept fighting, but for the (tear) gas." Batusha said she was hospitalized for ten days after the incident. She said she and the others would fight any Serbs who attempt to return to Krushe e Vogel.

14. (SBU) Agron Limani, whose father and 23 year-old brother died in the massacre, told PolOff and PolFSN on June 21 that village residents were satisfied with apologies from Principle Deputy SRSR Steve Schook and Police Commissioner Kai Vittrup and with their promises to notify residents in advance of any future visits. However, he added that the officials heightened the resident's suspicions during a recent visit when they refused to clarify who was in the convoy. Limani said he has a contact who was traveling with the convoy who claims there were seven Serbs in the convoy. Limani said the contact claims the convoy's participants included the wartime commander of the Yugoslav army garrison at Prizren, three former residents of the village, and three Serbs that the contact did not recognize.

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15. (SBU) Head of UNMIK's Department of Justice (DOJ) Al Moskowitz told PolOff on June 27 that there were four Serbs in the convoy, including two interpreters and two &VIPs.8 He said one of the VIPs was Tomislav Visnjic, Lead Counsel at the ICTY for General Dragoljub Ojdanic, while the other identified himself as an ICTY investigator (Ref B). Moskowitz said UNMIK is investigating the identity of the second VIP, who might have been a former resident of the village traveling under an assumed name. Moskowitz said the UNMIK Civil Police who organized the visit considered giving advance notice to the residents, but decided that doing so would increase the security risk. According to UNMIK spokesman Gyorgy Kakuk, a preliminary investigation by the DOJ determined that "a number of mistakes were made in the process of approving and planning this visit."

98 OF 112 VICTIMS STILL MISSING  
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16. (SBU) Limani said only two of the 112 victims have been returned to their families, and 12 more were in the Office of Missing Persons and Forensics (OMPF) morgue in Rahovec/Orahovac. Acting OMPF director Valerie Brasey told PolOff on June 22 that the 12 sets of remains consisted of assorted bones that were found last year near Prizren and identified as Krushe e Vogel victims. She said the families accepted OMPF's recommendation that the remains be held at the OMPF morgue in Rahovec in case more bones are later identified and matched to those bodies.

17. (SBU) However, Brasey said she believes that the other victims were burned beyond identification and will never be found. She said none of the bodies found in mass graves in Serbia have been linked to Krushe e Vogel, nor does she expect any to be. (NOTE. Victims of a similar massacre in the adjacent village of Krushe e Madhe were found in mass graves in Serbia, and 45 of them were repatriated to Kosovo

and buried on March 26 (Ref C). END NOTE).

FAMILY MEMBERS BELIEVE THE BODIES CAN BE FOUND

18. (SBU) Limani, however, believes at least eight more bodies are in the Prizren area, based on information from a Kosovo Albanian doctor who says Serbs forced him to conduct autopsies on 20 Krushe e Vogel victims. Limani expressed frustration that former Kosovo Serb neighbors who participated in the massacre, and a Serb prosecutor who he says was present at the autopsies, still have not been investigated, charged and arrested. Limani insisted that these people have information about what happened to the rest of the bodies, and said the fate of the missing could easily be resolved if there was the political will to do so.

19. (SBU) Limani said the international community was destabilizing Kosovo by protecting Serbs and insisting on the implementation of standards instead of helping the victims. He criticized western nations who he says have given refugee status to Serbs from the village who were involved in the crimes and should instead be treated as "common criminals." He urged UNMIK to issue Interpol warrants on the Serbs who participated in the massacre, and to seek their extradition to Kosovo for trial. (NOTE. Moskowitz said he has tried unsuccessfully to convince war crimes judges and prosecutors in Belgrade to send suspects to Kosovo for trial by international prosecutors and judges. END NOTE).

FUNDING FOR INVESTIGATIONS AND EXHUMATIONS

110. (SBU) UNMIK's Department of Justice has asked the USG for USD 180,000 to fund the review of several thousand files that could assist with war crimes prosecutions. OMPF has also requested 200,000 euros to fund ongoing exhumations,

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including both new cases and re-exhumations (requested by families) of conflict victims who were buried immediately after the war without concrete identification and for whom no death certificates were issued (Ref D). OMPF program officer Klaire Kasibayo told PolOff on June 26 that because a major exhumation scheduled for June was canceled due to insufficient leads, OMPF now has approximately 90,000 euros remaining from the USD 300,000 OMPF received from the USG in 2005 for exhumations. She said this can fund exhumations through the end of October 2006.

111. (SBU) COMMENT. The ordeal that these women suffered in no way excuses their attack on visiting international police officers and attorneys. However, it underscores the need to bring justice to the victims and close missing persons cases, even those for which bodies may never be found. END COMMENT.

112. (U) Post clears this message in its entirety for release to Special Envoy Ahtisaari.  
GOLDBERG